Press Release

Why Is India Not Repairing?

- ***Toxics Link study identifies high repair costs, spare part shortages, and service barriers as significant challenges to sustaining India's traditional repair culture.***
- ***Environmental consciousness currently plays a limited role in repair decisions across all income groups, with repair cost and investment recovery remaining the primary drivers for consumers.***

New Delhi, March 19, 2026: Mounting electrical and electronic waste (e-waste) has emerged as a serious concern for both public health and the environment. Yet, as consumption of electronic devices increases, the culture of repairing products appears to be steadily declining. Is India's rising purchasing power, combined with rapid technological advancement, eroding the country's long-standing culture of repair and resourcefulness?

The Toxics Link report titled **"*Stitch in Time: Evaluating Consumer Behaviour & Electronics Repair Accessibility*"** examines the repair landscape across five major Indian cities: Delhi, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Nagpur, and Ranchi. By analysing IT and household appliance through economic, infrastructural, and behavioural lenses, the study identifies the key factors driving consumer decisions. It underscores repair sector as a vital pillar of India's transition towards a circular economy.

The study identifies significant hurdles faced by the repair sector, including a shortage of skilled and certified technicians, limited availability of spare parts, and a lack of advanced diagnostic tools to undertake repair of complex and high-end products. These factors, along with low profit margins caused by undercut prices and the lack of standard pricing continue to hinder the repair sector.

Furthermore, consumer behaviour dampens growth due to a preference for newer models. The lack of warranty on repairs and low customer trust in repair quality, especially from unauthorised repair providers, is also leading to the erosion of the repair culture. Notably, the survey found that price and performance remain the primary drivers for consumers, while environmental impact plays a negligible role in decision-making—even among higher-income groups.

Key Findings

- Delhi & Hyderabad show a dominant replacement trend that cuts across all economic groups, reflecting a fast-paced consumption pattern. Market behaviour in Nagpur is deeply divided by income; while high-income groups favour upgrades, middle-income consumers maintain a resilient preference for maintenance and repair.
- Despite a growing preference toward new purchases, Kolkata retains a unique "repair culture" sustained by its long-standing repair service ecosystems. Ranchi is emerging as the city with the strongest inclination toward repair, Ranchi's market is driven by cost-consciousness and a traditional value system that prioritises product longevity over replacement.
- The income-based trend analysis reveals that low-income groups prioritise repair for financial reasons, middle-income group choose based on cost-effectiveness whereas the high-income group opt for replacement driven by convenience, brand preferences and the desire for the latest technology.

Repair demand exists, but high costs, non-availability of original spare parts, and service barriers are steadily shifting consumers toward replacement. Says Swati Vishan, Sr. Program Officer, Waste and Sustainability Team, Toxics Link. Strengthening the repair sector would accelerate India's transition to a circular economy by reducing waste, conserving resources, lowering carbon emissions and boost the repair economy in alignment with UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)—responsible consumption and production (SDG 12), climate action (SDG 13), decent work and economic growth (SDG 8).

The report recommends:

- Implement a "Right to Repair" framework that mandate OEMs to provide access to repair manuals, and genuine parts to empower consumers and independent technicians.
- Create standards and a certification process for the repair sector to ensure quality and build consumer trust through formal warranties.
- Decentralise spare part logistics by building a distributive supply chain for genuine components to eliminate the regional shortages that force premature product disposal.
- Launch national repair training initiatives
- Execute a government-led mandate to promote repair as a key pillar of India's circular economy and a sustainable consumer choice.

Though the Right to Repair movement is slowly gaining momentum, India, traditionally known for its strong repair culture, will have to create a robust framework to address the challenges faced by consumers in repairing their electrical and electronic goods. An environmentally sustainable repair ecosystem is the need of the hour which the industry, policymakers, repair professionals, and consumers can together create.

"Strengthening India's repair culture through policy support is essential to promote the transition towards a circular economy in the electronics & IT sector," says Satish Sinha, Associate Director, Toxics Link.

About Toxics Link

Toxics Link is an Indian environmental research and advocacy organisation set up in 1996, engaged in disseminating information to help strengthen the campaign against toxics pollution, provide cleaner alternatives, and bring together groups and people affected by this problem. Toxics Link's Mission Statement - "Working together for environmental justice and freedom from toxins."

More at: www.toxicslink.org

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